The Seed Sower.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
1. December. Poem. Christina G. Rossetti	145
2. The Humanities of Christmas Day. An Address. Rev. Joseph Wood ...	145
3. A Yorkshire Hamlet. Clement E. Pike ...	148
4. Biographical Addresses by the late Rev. Dr. Sadler. Jeremy Taylor and his "Holy Living and Dying"	149
5. Our Oxford Letter	152
6. Our Ancient Chapels. Elder Yard Chapel, Chesterfield, 1694	152
7. Elementary Morals, with Examples. Rev. Frank K. Freeston	154
8. Wordmongers	155
9. A Protestant Village in the Campagna ...	157
10. The Confessional in the Church of England	158
11. The Children's Page	160

December.

I.

Dimmest and brightest month am I;
My short days end, my lengthening days begin;
What matters more or less sun in the sky,
When all is sun within?

Ivy and privet dark as night,
I weave with hips and haws a cheerful show,
And holly for a beauty and delight,
And milky miseltoe.

While high above them all I set
Yew twigs and Christmas. roses pale;
Then spring her snow-drop and her violet
May keep so sweet and frail.

May keep each singing bird,
Of all her happy birds that singing build;
For I've a carol which some shepherds heard
Once in a wintry field.

II.

Wintry boughs against a wintry sky;
Yet the sky is pretty blue,
And the clouds are pretty bright:
Who can tell but sap is mounting high,
Out of sight,
Ready to burst through?

Winter is the mother-nurse of spring,
Lovely for her daughter's sake,
Not unlovely for her own;
For a future buds in everything;
Grown or blown,
Or about to break.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

The Humanities of Christmas Day.

AN ADDRESS BY THE

REV. JOSEPH WOOD.

It may be discussed whether we owe most to Jesus for his teaching about God or his teaching about man. The answer will partly depend on a man's spiritual temperament. The mystical and the humanitarian are both necessary elements of the religious character, but very rarely are they found in equal balance. "Seeing God" and "serving man" are two sides of the same Christ-like disposition which yet are differently emphasised in different souls. "Seeing God" in one case is the motive and reason for serving man; in another, "Serving man" is the eye-salve by which the spiritual faculties are opened to behold the vision of God. I suppose it would be generally asserted that our chief indebtedness to the teaching of Jesus is for his doctrine of God, his revelation of God's Fatherhood and boundless mercy,—a Fatherhood that needed not to be reconciled, a mercy that asked for no propitiation, a great heartedness which could never cease to love and pity. It were, indeed, a shame to forget for one moment all that we owe to Jesus in this direction. For he made it impossible for anyone who followed him and understood his

meaning not to love God. We yield all gratitude to him who taught men to say "Our Father."

Yet it may be that the world is still more indebted to Jesus for his conception of man. It may be said that "Humanity" as a virtue and a sacred, binding, universal idea, began with Jesus. In a large and very true sense there was no humanity in the world before the first Christmas Day, none of that regard for man as man which marks all Christian civilisation. In the ancient world there was bravery and fortitude, there was patriotism and justice, there was the love of friend and household, but there was no sense of universal brotherhood, nor of the ties that unite poor and rich, strong and feeble, wise and simple in mutual service and dependence. It was natural that tribes, races, and nations should live in hostility. The sick, wounded, poor, and aged perished and no man heeded. The world was for the strong and the successful. In all the great city of Rome, with its million of inhabitants, there was not a single institution for the succour and help of poverty; not a single hospital for the sick, nor asylum for the aged, nor orphanage for little children. There was no humanity. But with Christianity came a wonderful change. The doctrine of Jesus that God cares for all men with an infinitely tender regard, that every man is precious for his own sake to God, and has in him something of Divinity, that the poor and sick, the aged and outcast have lavished on them all the compassion of heaven, that there is no lost, degraded piece of silver bearing the King's image, but Jesus seeks to save it from the mire and to restore its brightness, that there is no lost sheep, but is worth all the shepherd's effort to bring it home, that each individual soul is of Divine origin and may be possessed and filled with God as Jesus was, this is the teaching which more than anything else has made the Son of Man loved and followed. Whatever was human touched him, as it has touched no other; we are all less human than Christ. He loved and rejoiced and grieved as one to whom every man was a dear brother. He was capable, indeed, of terrible anger against men, but it was against men who in the name of God committed outrages on humanity. Those whom he repelled were the exclusive. When his denunciations were the hottest, his reproaches were such as this: "Ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers." To Jesus men as men were the children of his Father. To be humane was to be in sympathy with him; to be inhuman was to offend him and his Father. There was in him a richness and warmth of human sympathy which place his life before the largest-hearted of us as a power and an example.

The brand-new religions, which are sometimes offered us as superior to Christianity are all based on ideas which they have taken from Christianity. The Divinity and central idea of Positivism is Humanity. Mr. Cotter Morrison, a brilliant opponent of Christianity, calls his new cult "The Service of Man." But where did these conceptions of "Humanity" and "The Service of Man" come from? From the teaching of Jesus; and it is childish folly to think that in setting forth these conceptions men are announcing wonderful discoveries of the nineteenth century, or are giving to the world a religion before which that of Jesus must pale its ineffectual fires. It is a part of the religion of Jesus which they have in their hands, and with which they hope to regenerate the world.

A modern poet, full of the scepticism of his age, tells us that Jesus has accomplished nothing:—

> "Has he fed full men's starved-out souls?
> Has he brought freedom upon earth?
> Or are there less oppressions done
> On this wide world beneath the sun?"

Nothing but the most bitter prejudice could lead an educated man to speak like this. The world is reverberant with voices that contradict him. To say nothing of the influence Jesus has exerted upon individual souls, inspiring them to truth and virtue, to love and self-denial and magnanimity, look only at what may be called the public results of his teaching—that enthusiasm for humanity which came in with Jesus, and has already done so much to ameliorate conditions, to enlighten ignorance, to relieve darkness, to modify and mould legislation in favour of the people, to promote a true equality, to break down class and race distinctions. Consider how in loyalty to him and inspired by his spirit, men have stood up against

Priesthoods, Kingcrafts, and Tyrannies. Contrast the commonplaces of morality to-day, I will not say with the ordinary notions that were prevalent before Christianity, but with the teaching of the world's best and wisest philosophers. Plato somewhere congratulates the Athenians as having exhibited towards the Persians "a pure and heartfelt hatred." To-day, a man would be considered a barbarian who uttered such a sentiment. Aristotle's description of the ideal man is one that we cannot now read without a smile. He who occupies himself solely with honour, walking with a stately gait, speaking with a commanding voice, looking with contempt on the poor and ignorant, but receiving a certain dignified pleasure when the illustrious treat him with respect—such a man Jesus has taught us to regard not as great, but as pitifully small.

The fundamental moral and humanitarian principles of Jesus have been woven into the fabric of our social and public life. Far as we are yet from the actual realisation of these principles, they are in our blood, in our institutions, in our ideals, and Christ's Golden Rule, his new commandment of love, his doctrine of brotherhood, his substitution of self-denial for self-aggrandisement as the test of human excellence, have been adopted by almost every thinker of repute. Strangely enough they are, sometimes, the religion of men who will have nothing to do with Jesus.

Now, Christmas Day is a day sacred to Humanity. It comes round to remind us of Christ's teaching about man, and of all the charities and enthusiasms by which we serve God in serving man. The humanity of this festive season is irresistibly contagious. We have probably all of us done something, at the sacrifice of time and money, to make this a happy time for a few of the children of our common Father. It is a marvellous triumph for Christianity that on one day of the year, at any rate, we forget grudges and animosities, wrongs and offences, and think kindly of all men, and are willing to do good and communicate and forgive.

But is it to be for only one day in the year? Are we to be content to serve and forgive and help on Christmas day, and all the rest of the year go on our way pushing, grasping, grinding? What are special times and seasons for? Surely, to make all seasons like themselves. When we set apart Sunday that we may have a special time for focussing our thoughts and feelings on the great deep things of the Kingdom, it is that there may flow out from Sunday some blessed influence on every day of the week. Christmas day, in like manner, is a sign to us that every day should be consecrated to humanity, and made beautiful by peace and goodwill. It is Christ's aim that every day should be a Christmas Day. Is that so with us? There was a curious institution in the middle ages, half-beautiful, half-grotesque. When private feuds had become so numerous and fierce that they actually threatened not only the peace of the community, but the very existence and safety of society, an attempt was made to appease them by what was called the "Truce of God." It is not known exactly how this arose; but it was proclaimed in many cities from time to time, and strictly observed. According to this truce, feuds and quarrels stopped for four days in the week. The bell tolled at sunset on Wednesday evening to intimate that on pain of ecclesiastical penalties, all hostilities were to cease until sunrise next Monday morning. Not a blow must be struck, not a sword taken from its scabbard. And until Monday morning hostilities were suspended; but then, says the historian, they were always faithfully renewed! Christmas Day is a truce of God; but, alas! are we not apt the next day to return to our old life of selfishness? It is not so hard to be a Christian for one day out of every 365! But should not the whole year feel the influence of the Christmas spirit? After manifesting peace and goodwill on the 25th December, must we go back again on the 26th to our old hardness and cruelty? Christmas Day fails unless it makes all the days of the year a little like itself—not it may be in way of feasting and present giving, but in thinking kindly, in acting generously, in behaving considerately, in cultivating the Christian temperament. Peace and goodwill are not virtues for high festivals only, like rare jewels worn once in the season and then carefully locked up in the safe. They are *homespun*, for every day wear. They are not only the great humanities of Christmas Day, they are universal in their

scope, always and everywhere binding. Let the truce of God run on through all the year. Let Christmas Day, with its kindly thoughts and friendly greetings, and tender memories, give something of its tone and colour to every day. Let the humanities which make this day fair and gracious run over to redeem the common days of the year from greed and selfishness, and bring near the time

When all men's good shall be each man's rule,
And universal peace lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Through all the circle of the Golden Year!

A Yorkshire Hamlet.

If one would forget for a time the bitter cry of the over-crowded, let him come here. This Yorkshire Hamlet is far indeed from "the madding crowd." About a score of houses, two of which are unroofed and deserted, make a kind of street, if the lane, fringed by brown pasture through which a steam meanders, can be called a street. The houses, of solid grey stone with low pitched roofs, stand in their own grounds. There is about each one of them a sturdy individuality, very different from the characterless monotony of rows.

Nearly all of them are ancient. Probably the most modern structure is the Wesleyan Chapel, the only religious edifice, used as such, in the hamlet. I say *used as such*, for opposite me is a farm-house, containing a traceried window dating from a period before the Reformation. This ecclesiastical relic marks what was once a private chapel, though for centuries it has descended to baser uses.

Dates carved on other houses, which take one back to the times of the Merry Monarch, may be found. The house in which I sojourn bears no date, but its walls are fit for a fortress, and must have seen two centuries. Before my window, a field or two away, are telegraph posts, for so a persistent civilization will intrude even here, which mark the high road, but beyond, a glorious pamorana, stretch the misty purplish moors. Behind are lonely hills, culminating in the mighty mass of Ingleborough, 2375 feet high, and, save one, the highest mountain in this big county.

Cattle farming is the occupation here. Cattle, of the breed that Peter Graham loves to paint, roam over the moors, with mountain sheep of Scotch pedigree, and horses also graze at large. On the moor too, near the houses, hens cackle, mingling their domesticated voices with the wild cry of the plover. And the dogs must not be ignored. No-where is the dog a more important member of society than here. He takes life seriously, and usually wears an anxious look. If those critics who accuse Landseer of making his dogs too human would come here they might reverse their verdicts. The weight of anxious responsibility expressed in the faces of some of these animals is almost awful. Much depends upon them, and they are aware of the fact. Stroll about and you will hear weird whistles, and see a dog performing evolutions which to the uninstructed mind seem meaningless, but which are as full of hidden purpose as the opening moves of a good chess player.

One would suppose that the dwellers in this secluded spot, open to the breeze of moor and mountain, would enjoy rude health; but it is not always so. Life's ailments and sorrows do not neglect this out-of-the-way place. That cough means chronic bronchitis. It kept me awake half the night, and when the misty morning dawned I heard low voices, and expressions of sorrow. A heavy-hearted messenger had brought tidings of the death of his six months' old baby, and wreaths of Autumn flowers in the passage on the morrow were mutely eloquent.

Here, as elsewhere, "men must work and women must weep" though I fancy a good deal of the work also falls to the women's lot. And here the consolations of religion are needed. Though isolated the dwellers in the hamlet are not neglected in this respect. No spire points to heaven, but in the little school-house the Curate from the nearest village holds plain hearty week-night services in the winter months, and both "Church" and "Chapel" people mingle at these gatherings. Then there is the little stone building which bears on its lamp the legend "Wesleyan Chapel," and here honest neighbours, who fight the same fight of faith, meet for prayer and mutual edification.

CLEMENT E. PIKE.

Envy not the appearance of happiness in any man, for thou knowest not his secret griefs.

Biographical Addresses.

By THE LATE REV. DR. SADLER.

JEREMY TAYLOR AND HIS "HOLY LIVING AND DYING."

Soon after Queen Mary ascended the throne of England, the Vicar of Hadleigh, in Suffolk, the friend and formerly chaplain of Cranmer, heard one day his church bells at an unusual hour. On going to the church, he found that an altar had been erected in the chancel, and a Roman Catholic priest was about to celebrate Mass. The vicar remonstrated but was forced out of his own church and summoned to appear in London, before Bishop Gardiner, to answer certain complaints. Some of the vicar's friends, alarmed at the spirit of the times, urged him to fly beyond the sea; but this he refused to do, and in London he was offered the alternative of recantation, or being sent to prison as a traitor and heretic. After nearly two years of confinement, he was brought before a tribunal, consisting of Bishop Gardiner and other bishops, and as he still refused to abjure his protestant faith, he was sentenced to death. A little later, having refused again to turn to "Holy Mother Church," he was degraded by Bishop Bonner, *i.e.*, he had an insulting garment put upon him. The next night, a mother and two children were watching in St. Botolph's Church porch, without Aldgate, and towards morning, though it was still dark, one of the children saw her father being taken past and cried out: "O my dear father! They are taking my father away," a leave-taking followed between the husband and wife, the father and children; and in the morning the prisoner, in charge of the sheriff and a guard, set out for Hadleigh, where the execution was to take place. The story is told in Fox's book of martyrs, how calmly and cheerfully the vicar bore himself, how unmoved he was by the urgent entreaties of his attendants that he would save his life by recantation, and how on reaching Aldham Common, he stood amidst the flames with folded hands without a groan or a movement, and with that wonderful apparent indifference to pain which marytrs so often manifested, till an end was put to his life by a blow from one of the executioners. Around him were a large number of weeping parishioners, who reverenced him for his learning and abilities, and loved him for his personal kindness to themselves; and in after times a rude stone was set up on Aldham Common, with this inscription:

> "Dr. Taylor, for defending what was good,
> In this place shed his blood."

The year in which Dr. Rowland Taylor suffered, was 1555; and not only did he suffer, but the family fortunes suffered too. When, in 1613, his lineal descendant, Jeremy Taylor, was born, it was as the son of a barber at Cambridge. The father Nathaniel, however, bore a respectable character, and according to his son's account of him, was reasonably learned; having "solely grounded his children in grammer and mathematices." At the age of thirteen, Jeremy entered the University as a sizar, *i.e.*, a poor student, who, for the advantages be derived, was expected to render services to students of the wealthier classes.

The particulars given of his education, and indeed of his whole life, are not very full, and some even of these are of such doubtful accuracy that they cannot be relied on, and therefore will be omitted by me. Still the materials are ample for such a sketch as I propose to give, and to show us what sort of life he lived and what manner of man he was.

The first sign of his characteristic excellence occurs when being 20 years of age, and having taken his master's degree he was asked by a friend to supply for a few Sundays, at St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, and produced an impression which led to his preaching before Archbishop Laud, at Lambeth. The Archbishop highly commended the sermon, but objected to the preacher's youth for which fault Jeremy Taylor begged his pardon, and promised that if he lived he would amend it. Laud obtained for him a fellowship at All Souls', Oxford, and made him one of his own chapalins. After four years at Oxford, the young clergyman was presented to the living at Uppingham, in Rutlandshire, where in 1639, he married Phœbe Langsdale, of whom little more is known than that she was sister to a physician. But in a short time that series of troubles was to begin which would not end till he had only a few more years to live.

In 1642, one of his three little sons died, and the mother soon followed. And in that same year the great struggle between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians was drawing towards a crisis. When Charles set up his standard, and called upon his subjects to rally round him, Jeremy Taylor was among the first to respond, serving his king alike with his person and his pen. His living at Uppingham was taken from him; he was in pecuniary difficulties, and, in 1644, we find him in Wales, a prisoner of the Parliamentary army. One condition of his release may have been that he should not return to the Royal standard; at all events he remained in Wales, where he married a lady, possessing the estate of Mandinam in Carmarthenshire. Probably, however, a heavy fine was paid for his freedom, for, notwithstanding his wife's property, he continued very poor, supporting himself in part by a school, but being in part also dependent on the liberality of friends. He speaks of being "stripped of the little reliques of our fortune," and of his narrow circumstances. Of the difficulties and trials he had to encounter, he has himself given a description in his own way: "In the great storm" (he says) "which dashed the vessel of the church in pieces, I had been cast on the coast of Wales, and, in a little boat, thought to have enjoyed that rest and quietness which in England, in a far greater, I could not hope for. Here I cast anchor, and thinking to ride safely, the storm followed me with so impetuous violence, that it broke a cable, and I lost my anchor. And here again I was exposed to the mercy of the sea, and the gentleness of an element that could neither distinguish things nor persons; and but that He that stilleth the raging of the sea and the noise of his waves, and the madness of his people, had provided a plank for me, I had been lost to all the opportunities of content or study; but I know not whether I been been more preserved by the courtesies of my friends, or the gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy." The last clause is usually supposed to refer to some unexplained magnamity on the part of those to whom he was opposed in politics and religion; but I am inclined to think his enemy may have been misfortune herself, who, though she laid heavy burdens on him for many years, yet never oppressed him beyond what he could bear, and always left him much for which to be thankful.

One of the consolations he had was that he was never without a few warm and fast friends. In a last interview he received from Charles in prison, as a token of regard, his watch and a few pearls and rubies from the ebony case in which his Bible had been kept. Among those who showed Jeremy Taylor marked kindness was Warner, Bishop of Rochester, who though lamenting some of his religious opinions, and though himself in straitened circumstances, did not fail to assist a friend whose wants were more pressing. There were, too, Lord and Lady Carbery, who were all the more to Taylor from living near his Welsh home. Between him and them, there was constant intercourse, and there grew up a strong attachment. Within the walls of Lord Carbery's mansion at Golden Grove, Jeremy Taylor conducted religious services for the family, and those who liked to join from the neighbourhood. And the second Lady Carbery, daughter of the first Earl of Bridgwater, and the original of the "lady" in Milton's "Comus," became also a true and valued friend. Occasionally Jeremy Taylor visited London and preached as he had opportunity. Among his hearers, in 1654, one Sunday was the well-known John Evelyn, who was so impressed with the sermon that he sought the preacher's acquaintance "to confer with him about some spiritual matters;" and he afterwards made him his "ghostly father," getting as much of his society as he could during the London visits, keeping up a very interesting correspondence with him, and relieving his poverty by a pension, till it became unnecessary at the Restoration.

It was, moreover, during the 12 or 13 years of Jeremy Taylor's residence in Wales, that he wrote most, indeed almost all, of those great works of his, which have given him a foremost place in the religious literature of this country, and by which, for more than two hundred years, he has been a favourite companion of thousands of thoughtful students, and a "ghostly father" to a still larger number of men, who have been less intent on a knowledge of divine things than on a devout heart and a Godly life. I doubt very much whether, if he had had a smooth path and a sheltered lot, he would have written either so much or so well. I doubt whether his essay on friendship would have been so wise and good

and beautiful, if his circumstances had not brought him into the closest relations with a few tried friends rather than into less intimate contact with many. One thing that especially strikes me is that in all his privations and sufferings he never seems to lose heart and hope and geniality. "I am persuaded," he says, "that to good men and wise a persecution is nothing but a changing the circumstance of religion;" and elsewhere, "God disposes all things wisely; and religion can receive no detriment or diminution but by our own fault." In one of his letters he says, "We have only to remove the dark side of the lanthorn, and there is light both for ourselves and others."

He had need to remove the dark side of the lanthorn in his own case. He appears to have been imprisoned a second and a third time, for his freedom of speech in Wales, once, probably, in Chepstow Castle. The kind of freedom which cost him his liberty, may be judged from an instance. A little practical and devotional work of his, was entitled "The Golden Grove," as a mark of his regard for his friends who lived there; but in the preface he said, "'Tis true valour to dare to be undone, and the consequence of truth hath ever been in danger of his teeth, and it is a blessing if men escape so in these days, when not the safeties only, but the souls of men are betrayed." These words are believed to have been the cause of one of his imprisonments.

But other sorrows came and touched him so deeply, that he seems to have been no longer able to remain in what had for many years been his home. In 1656, he writes to Evelyn, "I am in some little disorder, by reason of the death of a little child of mine, a boy that lately made us very glad; but now he rejoices in his little orb, while we think and sigh, and long to be as safe as he is." Then soon, there was another letter, saying: "It hath pleased God to send the small-pox and fevers among my children; and I have, since I received your last, buried two sweet, hopeful boys," and have now but one son left. He was, it is supposed, speaking only of his second family.

Some have thought that he took up his abode for a year or two in London; but this is doubtful. All that seems certain is that he preached there for a short time, to a small private congregation of Episcopalians. Even in this short time he was imprisoned in the Tower, the offence, as is alleged, being that to his collection of offices was affixed a print of Christ in the attitude of prayer. Bishop Heber ascribes the indiscretion to the bookseller, and states that an act had recently been passed rendering such representations punishable by fine and imprisonment.

In 1658, Jeremy Taylor accepted a lectureship at Lisburn, in Ireland, and took up his abode probably between that town and Pormore, the residence of his patron and friend the Earl of Conway. In addition to his lectureship, he had charge of a small congregation, which met for worship in a ruined church at Kilulta. The neighbourhood is as beautiful as it is quiet, and spots are still pointed out which are said to have been his favourite places for study and devotion. Two lakes, studded with islands, washed the park. He had some trouble from a man who accused him of having made the sign of the cross at the baptismal service; but he was not driven away on this account, as he, at one time, thought it not unlikely he should be. His isolation led him to write earnestly to Evelyn, for intelligence, as to what was going on in the busy world, what books had been published, what learned men abroad or at home, were beginning to fill the world with fame, and to take the places of eminent men who had died?

This retirement, however, did not last long enough to be wearisome; after two years came the Restoration, his friends were in power and he was made Bishop of Down Connor and Dromore, and Vice-chancellor of the University of Dublin. The change from poverty to wealth, from a narrow field of labour to a wide one, from a life chiefly devoted to study to one in which he was almost wholly engrossed in work, was great; but he was indefatigable in his industry, though not without an occasional sigh for his former beloved quiet. Nor were his new circumstances without new difficulties. It was only by degrees that his conciliatory spirit met with response from those to whom he had been opposed; the government of his country, finding itself secure, flung off the mask of liberality, which it wore at first; protestant preachers were sent to Irish parishes, in which English was not understood, to conduct, in English, services which the people were bound by law to attend (though the penalty

for non-attendance was not usually enforced), and time brought troubles of a kind in which we are all sharers—the only remaining son of the second family was buried at Lisburn. Of the two remaining sons by the first marriage one was killed in a duel, and the other, who had been a disappointment rather than a comfort to his father, died in London the day before his father's last illness began. In 1667, Bishop Taylor, who seems to have been fond of Lisburn, had gone thither, as he was wont from time to time, for a little rest, and had begun to prepare a discourse on the Beatitudes, and then and there, in his 55th year, after he had been a bishop seven years, he was attacked by fever, and rested from all his earthly labours. He left behind him, a widow and three daughters; but his six sons were all dead, though, probably, he did not live long enough to receive intelligence of the death of the last of them.

(To be continued.)

Our Oxford Letter.

Manchester College, Oxford,
November 10th.

The present session at Manchester College has opened with great promise of a most satisfactory year. It may be said, indeed, that this year marks an epoch in the history of the college for the inauguration of the new residence scheme, and the addition to the college staff of Rev. W. E. Addis, as resident vice-principal, is the first step towards making the college a part of the university—a result which will be fully attained next year.

There are a greater number of students at the college than there have been for some time, among them being two graduates of Harvard, Messrs. Nichols and Greenman, and another member of the Brahmo Semage, Mr. Kamalaher, while our lectures are further graced by the presence of a lady, Miss Harrington, who has for some years held a pulpit at Pepperel, Mass., U.S.A., and has come to study at Manchester College for a year.

There are also two distinguished attenders at lectures, Professor Howison, of California, who is attending Professor Upton's course on Philosophy, and Professor Holmes, of Strathmore College, Philadelphia, who comes to one of Dr. Dummond's courses on the New Testament.

With the increase of members the various college societies have started into new life.

There was a spirited meeting of the Discussion Society a fortnight ago, in which Mr. J. H. Woods moved: "That this house would regret the present Disestablishment of the Church of England," and after a vigorous debate the motion was carried, in spite of strenuous opposition.

At the last meeting of the Martineau Club, Mr. E. G. Evans read an extremely interesting paper on "Some Side-lights on Welsh Church History," in which he proved the independant origin and general superiority of the Welsh over the English Church. The society had to trust to the speaker's veracity, as no one was in a position to contradict what he said, and the members went home with the sad conviction that the wrongs of Ireland were as nothing to the wrongs of Wales!

The new residential scheme is working splendidly, under the supervision of Mr. Addis, whose genial manners make him very much liked by all the men, and the members of the college have been brought together in an intimacy never possible before, when they were scattered over the town in separate lodgings.

Mr. Hargrove, the Tate Lecturer for the present term, has begun an interesting set of lectures, and is welcomed by us as one who has mastered the difficulties of pulpit and pastoral work.

We are rejoiced to hear that one later "Senior," Mr. Hall, is flourishing greatly under German professors, and will on his return enter on his ministry at Norwich.

E. S. H.

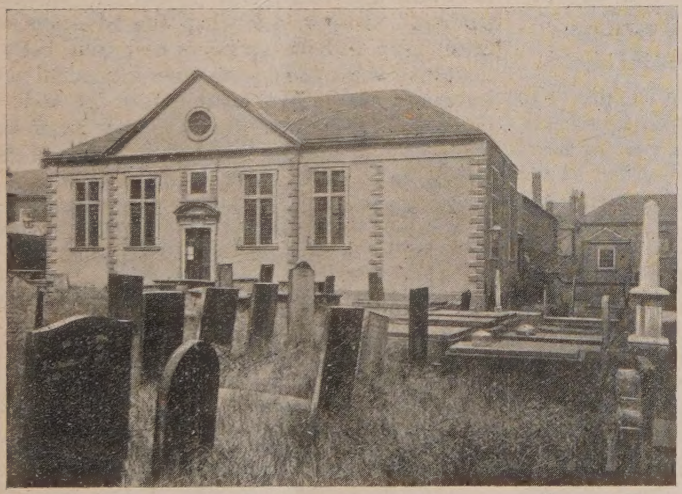
❧ OUR ∴ ANCIENT ∴ CHAPELS. ❧

Elder Yard Chapel, Chesterfield, 1694.

This old "Dissenting Protestant" Chapel goes back to the seventeenth century, and its congregation to the Act of Uniformity. In 1662, the Rev. John Billingsley, M.A., of the Chesterfield Parish Church, was ejected from his living because he would not take, or put a forced interpretation upon, the oath of subscription, or stretch his conscience to the required compliance. "And yet," says Calamy, "he would not censure others, but quietly seceded from his station when he thought he could no longer hold it without sin." He continued, however, to labour in secret until driven away to Mansfield by the Five Mile Act, but he still came over to Chesterfield once a fortnight, travelling late in the night to come in unseen, and preaching also in the night with a weak constitution. He was a man of peace, and "much for accommodating lesser differences in religion. Few had more of heaven in them than he."

Another divine ejected from this town was the Rev. James Ford, who saw the Bartholomew storm arising, and gave his people warning. He was Congregational in his judgment, but had the highest respect for Mr. Billingsley, who was of a different judgment, being a Presbyterian.

This unity of spirit, under diversity of judgment, bore good fruit when the chapel was built in an interesting agreement to the effect that the Presbyterians and Congregationalists were to have joint use of the meeting house, each minister having his alternate turn in the service. Though not of long continuance, owing to the subsequent withdrawal of the Congregationalists, this experiment did great credit to the Presbyterian founders.



The foundation was laid in 1692, and the building completed in 1694. It was erected at the sole charge of Cornelius Clarke, to be used as a place of worship for Dissenting Protestants. Thomas Ogle, advanced in years, and Robert Ferne, a younger man, were appointed co-pastors. They were followed by Joseph Foolow, who died young in 1707, and whose grave is found in the chapel-yard.

Next came a Congregationalist from Wakefield, Thomas Elston, who had been a student at Frankland's Academy, at Rathmell; but he died within a year of his election, and his tomb, with its Latin inscription, adjoins that of its predecessor.

Thomas Elston was succeeded by John Thomas, who ministered for nine years. Amongst his friends was Thomas Secker, sent to the Grammar School there, and educated as a Dissenter, but promoted subsequently to the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

John Thomas was buried in the chancel of the Parish Church. Not far from his tombstone is one to the Rev. Christopher Smalley, who came from Atherstone to Chesterfield in 1722, and remained until he died in 1743. The baptismal registry begins with his ministry.

A third memorial stone, near the west door of the church, bears the name of the Rev. James Heywood, who for the next 29 years faithfully preached the Word at Elder Yard.

His successor, however, was to surpass this record. On a tablet of white marble on the chapel wall are recounted the many Christian virtues, amiable manners and excellent endowments of the Rev. Thomas Astley, who was "the affectionate pastor of this congregation above forty years." He was one of the Astleys of Chowbent, in Lancashire, had been educated under James Day, at Lancaster, then at the Dissenting Academy at Daventry, and, finally, at the Warrington Academy, where, later, he was pressed to become classical tutor. He declined, however, and started a school instead at Chesterfield, which he carried on for 25 years with much acceptance. On his retirement in 1813, the congregation invited the Rev. George Kenrick, who removed after a very short pastorate.

Robert Wallace, a York student, took his place, and preached for 25 years, when in 1840 he was appointed Professor of Theology and then Principal of Manchester New College. During his learned and useful ministry the chapel was enlarged in 1823, and two new schoolrooms were erected in 1831. But he is remembered even more by his historical contributions to the *Christian Reformer*, his theological lectures in Manchester, and his three volumes of

Anti-Trinitarian Biography, which he compiled and published subsequently during his Bath ministry.

Alfred Turner Blythe was minister of the congregation from 1840 to 1847, and again from 1854 to 1856, the intervening period being occupied by Thomas Hunter. Francis Bishop ministered for eleven years, and Frederick Smith for ten. Since 1880 the Rev. Alex. Farquharson, now of Kentish Town, and the Rev. George Evans, of Gorton, have ministered in turn, and the Rev. Ambrose Bennett, the present minister began in 1894.

F. K. F.

Elementary Morals, with Examples.

LESSONS FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

II. VERACITY—*(Continued).*

VIII. VERACITY DOES NOT EQUIVOCATE.—To speak *less* than the whole truth is to equivocate. It is to keep back half of it, or a part at least, in order that the hearer may be misled by the rest. Equivocation, therefore, is never accidental, but always intentional; and it is difficult to meet because it hides in secret, and because it is half of it truth. The equivocator, therefore, is a dangerous character. He is bluntly called by Fuller a secret liar. "A secret liar, or equivocator," he says, "is such a one as by mental reservations and other tricks deceives him to whom he speaks. The temptation to equivocate steals in when to tell the whole truth would be unpleasant, or inconvenient, or incur punishment. But that temptation must be firmly resisted, or else we fall into falsehood.

"EQUIVOCATION WILL UNDO US."—When Macbeth's night porter is about to open the castle door to an uncertain visitor, he exclaims, "Faith, here's an equivocator that could swear in both the scales against either scale . . . yet could not equivocate to heaven." When Macbeth himself, on the field of battle, finds everything going against him, he recalls the strange prophecy of the witch and cries, "I begin to doubt the equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth."

When Hamlet questions one of the grave-diggers and receives such disguised replies, he says to Horatio, "How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card or equivocation will undo us."

"I WILL NOT EQUIVOCATE."—When William Lloyd Garrison began the Great Anti-Slavery Campaign and had already been put into prison, he was entreated to lessen further opposition by being more cautious, consenting to compromise and keeping back his strongest views. But his noble retort came quick and straight, "I will be true as truth . . . *I will not equivocate.*

A LIE WHICH IS HALF A TRUTH.—It is Tennyson who says:—

"That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies;
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But the lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight."

IX. VERACITY DOES NOT PREVARICATE.—To *evade* the truth is to prevaricate. It is to walk round it, instead of right at it; to shuffle and quibble instead of being as direct as possible; to deviate and veer about instead of "speaking straight." In law, it is when the advocate acts in collusion with his opponent and thus betrays the cause of his client; or, when a criminal uses ambiguous words in order to defeat the ends of justice. Prevarication in any form is mean, and the act of a coward, because it has not the courage to be straightforward.

ZIGZAG SPEECH.—A deaf and dumb boy was once asked, "What is truth?" He replied by thrusting his finger forward in a straight line. He was then asked, "What is falsehood?" Whereupon he made a zigzag instead. Prevarication is zigzag speech.

LUCY LARCOM'S COMPANION.—Lucy Larcom was an American mill girl, who by perseverance and study graduated at a University, and wrote books, poems, and hymns, which are read by many. During her Puritan girlhood, one of her companions prevaricated in her presence, and, in reply to her indignant remonstrance, carelessly answered, "I only *kind* of said no." The memory of that prevarication ever afterwards stood like a barrier between them, until, years after, she traced out her former friend once more, only to find, however, that this fault in her character had now ruined her whole nature. Veracity does not *kind* of say things.

A SERMON TO BOYS.—"Oh, block up, I entreat you, in your souls not only every avenue, but every lane, and bye-path, and little winding way to falsehood. And do not be content with the vow that no lie shall ever defile your lips, but nothing which has the most distant odour or complexion of a lie; no half lie or quarter lie; no sneaking subterfuge; no bragging exaggeration; *no prevaricating ambiguity*; no stammering suggestion; no half confession; no lie which, because it is half the truth, is ever the greatest of lies.'—*Canon Farrar at Marlborough.*

X. VERACITY KEEPS CLEAR OF CANT.—and that is a great achievement. Cant is hypocrisy in speech, and used for a special purpose. It may be either the whining cant of the impostor mendicant, to play upon our sympathy; or the flattering cant of conversation, pretending an interest or emotion which is not genuine; or the sanctimonious cant of unreal religion, using pious phrases to disguise its hollowness. Veracity scorns all hollow words.

BOSWELL AND JOHNSON.—Boswell once drew down upon himself the rebuke of Dr. Johnson for saying he was so vexed that he lost both sleep and appetite, when as a matter of fact he did not. "Sir, upon my honour," he urged, "I did *imagine* I was vexed, and took a pride in it; but it was perhaps cant, for I neither ate less nor slept less." Whereupon Johnson replied, "My dear friend, *clear your mind of cant.*"

KINGSLEY AND THE IMPOSTOR.—Nothing roused Kingsley to anger so much as cant. Once a begging impostor, on being refused at the door—thinking that at a parsonage, and with a parson, it would be a successful trick, fell on his knees on the steps, turned up the whites of his eyes, and began the disgusting counterfeit of a prayer. But in an instant, to his astonishment, the man found himself seized by collar and wrist, and swiftly pushed towards the gate with a firm grip and a shake that deprived him of all power to resist till he found himself safe outside.

XI. VERACITY AVOIDS CREDULITY.—It neither credits, nor states, on mere "hearsay." It distrusts idle rumour, which is generally a liar. It is not carried away by any cheap or popular cry, but guards its words from ignorance and prejudice. It prefers to hear both sides of a question before uttering its own opinion, and it requires satisfactory proofs before altering its conviction.

THE TENDENCY OF CREDULITY.—"Where there is any general body of sentiments pervading men living in society, whether it be religious or political—love, admiration, or antipathy—all incidents tending to illustrate that sentiment are eagerly believed, rapidly circulated, and (as a general rule) easily accredited. If real incidents are not at hand, impressive fiction will be provided to satisfy the demand. The perfect harmony of such fictions with the prevalent feeling stands in the place of certifying testimony, and causes men to hear them not merely with credence, but even with delight. To call them in question and require proof is a task which cannot be undertaken without incurring obloquy."

—*Grote* (*History of Greece*).

FRANK K. FREESTON.

Wordmongers.

A goose is a synonym for silliness, and a donkey for dulness; yet it is the donkey in a field which leads the horse into mischief and clover, teaches him to cross fences and open gates, while there is no more alert or wily bird than the wild goose. "Geese! Moirya!" said an Irish gillie to a friend of ours, who was vainly trying to get within range of some wild geese. "They're not geese at all, yere honour; it's only a bye-name they've got." Thrown upon their own resources, donkeys and geese are singularly sharp and shrewd creatures; they are stultified only through domestication. Housed and fed and marshalled in their every movement without will or thought of their own, their faculties are inevitably atrophied. Vast is the host of human geese and donkeys whose faculties have been similarly atrophied by excessive care and culture; and the most inveterate and incorrigible of the tribe are men whom the world most highly hold in honour for their wisdom. The elder Sheridan may not have merited Johnson's oft-quoted sarcasm, but it hits off happily the class to which this lexicographer and elocutionist belonged: "Why, sir, Sherry is dull, naturally dull; but it must have taken him a great deal of pains to become what we now see him. Such an excess of stupidity, sir, is not in Nature." Men who have been brought up to take words for things, and the memory of the thoughts of others for thinking; whose learning has smothered their natural intelligence, as an overcharge of coal puts out a feeble fire, might with unexaggerated truth be described as having taken a deal of pains to acquire a preternatural access of stupidity. "He might be a very clever man by nature, for aught I know," said Robert Hall of such a man; "but he had laid so many books on his head that his brains could not move." The most helplessly stupid men we have ever met were water-logged creatures of this kind, unwieldy with the weight of dead knowledge they had on board; while, as this knowledge had won them distinction in school and college, their stupidity was made impregnable by conceit. In order to acquire such knowledge these men must have had originally faculties above the average, but not having a digestion to correspond with their appetite, they failed to assimilate all that they devoured, and

grew at last to be intellectually as helpless as the Strasburg goose becomes physically. This is the secret of the complaint that education sometimes spoils a promising student for the ministry. No doubt our temptation is to be vindictively unjust to such learned dulness, in part because of the extravagant deference paid to it by Philistines, and in part because of the reverence it exacted from us in our school and college days. There is a natural reaction of contempt towards it, like that Montaigne felt: "I was often, when a boy, wonderfully concerned to see in the Italian farces a pedant always brought in for the fool of the play, and that the title of *Magister* was in no greater reverence amongst us; for, being delivered up to their tuition, what could I do less than to be jealous of their honour and reputation? I sought, I confess, to excuse them by the natural incompatibility betwixt the vulgar sort and men of a finer thread, both in judgment and knowledge, forasmuch as they go quite a contrary way to one another. But in this the thing I most stumbled at was that the bravest men were those who most despised them. Witness our famous Du Bellay:—

"'Mais je hay par sur tout un sçavoir pedantesqué.' And they used to do so in former times, for Plutarch says that 'Grecian and Scholar' were names of reproach and contempt among the Romans. And since, with the better experience of age, I find they were much in the right on't, and that 'the greatest clerks are not the wisest men.' . . . Whosoever shall narrowly pry into and thoroughly sift this sort of people wherewith the world is so pestered, will, as I have done, find that for the most part they neither understand others nor themselves; and that their memories are full enough, 'tis true, but the judgment totally void and empty."

And then Montaigne proceeds, after his manner, to draw from the armoury of learning herself weapons for his attack upon her; and he winds up with a doubt of the advantage of literary education to most men, and with a certainty of its disadvantage to those who fail to assimilate it into thought or action.

But what we see "writ large" in dons, doctors, doctrinaires, and all who answer to the definition of a prig—"an animal overfed for its size"—is to be seen writ small in many of the products of our Church and Board Schools. A large number of their *alumni* get only enough grinding to take the edge off their natural faculties, and to disable them wholly or in part for the work to their hand. "I took a great deal o' pains with Sammy's eddication, sir," says old Weller to Pickwick. "I let him run in the streets when he was wery young, and shift for hisself. It's the only way to make a boy sharp, sir." There is certainly something to be said for this point of view; though, of course, there is far more to be said for Mr. Pickwick's comment: "Rather a dangerous process, I should imagine." Only a curriculum which, by the establishment of technical instruction and otherwise, would combine practical with literary training can be called adequate. At any rate, the education which makes a man a mere wordmonger is the sorriest of all. "I knew an old Sophister," says Erasmus in his "Praise of Folly," "who was a Latinist, a Mathematician, a Philosopher, a Musician, and all to the utmost perfection, who, after threescore years' experience in the world, had spent the last twenty of them only in drudging to conquer the criticisms of grammar, and made it the chief part of his prayers that his life might be spared until he had learned how to distinguish rightly betwixt the eight parts of speech, which no grammarian, whether Greek or Latin, had accurately done yet. If anyone made what ought to have been a conjunction an adverb, it would have been, to his thinking, an adequate cause for war to do justice to the injured part of speech." It was probably this gentleman who cried to a grammatical arch-heretic, "May God confound you for your theory of irregular verbs!" If this baby-house playing with dolls and tin soldiers as though they were alive were taken generally for the folly it is, not much harm would be done; but these wordmongers, unfortunately, are accepted at their own valuation, as men not of learning only but of wisdom. As a matter of fact, however, as no man is more wise than he who has mastered his learning, so no man is more foolish than he whose learning has mastered him. Everyone knows Hobbes' famous saying: "Words are wise men's counters, but the money of fools;" but the context of this aphorism, which expresses admirably all we have been attempting to express, is not so generally known: "Natural sense and imagination are not subject to absurdity. Nature itself cannot err, and as men abound in copiousness of language, so they become more wise or more mad than ordinary. Nor is it possible without letters for any man to become excellently wise, or (unless

his memory be hurt by disease or ill constitution of organs) excellently foolish. For words are wise men's counters—they do but reckon by them; but they are the money of fools."

A Protestant Village in the Campagna.*

Protestantism, except in the Aosta valleys, plays no part in Italy. The Waldensian communities, the "Free Churches," the English, American, and German chapels in the large towns, hardly count; and the movement of Padre Gavazzi and others who dreamt of liberating, intellectually and spiritually, the Rome that had been liberated from the political *régime* of the Papacy, has died out. The anti-Papal spirit—years ago violent and even dangerous—finds expression only in drawing-room Atheism and in the masonic lodges which have been led into extremes—in part into absolute infidelity—by their conflict with clericalism.

Under these circumstances it is somewhat surprising that there should exist in a little forgotten village of the Sebine, at the foot of the venerable Soracte, a Protestant congregation with its own church, its own school, its own kindergarten: not quite a Protestant village, but at least one in which we find a number of Protestant institutions actively carried on. The Protestant parson of Forano Sabina, near Stimigliano, whose acquaintance we had made at the house of an Italian politician, had invited us to visit his village; and he himself a vivacious, energetic man in the fifties, the type of the Italian cavalry officer, with martial moustachios, came to fetch us from the station in a light trap. A pleasant drive through a landscape where only a cypress here and there, and the vines clambering up the trees, tell that we are in the south; then through a stretch of green woodland and we have reached the place where the very first houses that greet us on the left are the Evangelical Church, the parsonage—a pretty villa—and the Church Institute, the latter still building. In front of the church a blue-and-white flag is waving: it is Constitution Day, and the Protestants of Forano identify themselves with the Liberal or Patriotic party.

* Translated from the German by the Rev. Dr. Warschauer.

Early service being over, the amiable minister, Cavaliere Angelini, as well as his wife, an elegant, still young, American, hold themselves quite at our disposal; indeed, we hardly remember having spent such cheerful hours in any parsonage as in this American oasis. For it is from America that Pastor Angelini has been sent hither, in order to evangelise his native place, Forano, where years and years ago he has been a Catholic priest himself. Mind, there is not a suspicion of other worldliness about either him or about Mrs. Arabella, the graceful mistress of the house; their charming house is as comfortable as any you might find in a town, their drawing-room adorned with good pictures; in fact it is a parsonage like to many in the genial South German States, where piety is not confounded with asceticism.

During the ten years or so of his ministry at Forano, Signor Angelini has laboured with truly astonishing energy and resourcefulness. His efforts have resulted not only in winning over to his teaching some 150 persons, whom he has instructed in the Protestant mode of worship, which at first strikes the Italian peasant as so strange and unfamiliar, he has also built, with American money, a church containing accommodation for 300 worshippers, adorned with a bell tower, and adjoined by vestries (for school purposes), his own pleasant and even elegant dwelling-house, and the Church Institute; he has opened a créche for children, with a Piedmontese lady superintendent; founded a so-called "monte frumentario," or charitable institution, which provides the poor with cereals; started a "Protestant Musical Corps," which numbers 27 performers; and so on.

Although for years everything went smoothly, and the two communities lived in perfect peace, it was almost inevitable that a conflict should arise, and for two years past Forano has unhappily been the scene of bitter religious feuds. The following was the origin of this state of things. One fine day there appeared in Forano, at the instance of the Roman *Tribunale civile e penale*, a Monsignore Count Pezzani, with instructions to put an end to the Protestant Church in general, and to Signor Angelini in particular, at any cost—*a tutt' uorno*. The consequences of this campaign were, however, very different from what the enemy had expected, for the martial

pastor gave battle at once against the disturbers of his work, invoked the law, had dozens of evil-disposed persons, who had interrupted Protestant services and a funeral, by brawling and stone-throwing, arrested, and even the over-zealous Monsignore found himself placed handcuffed before a jury. Much as this warfare is to be regretted, Pastor Angelini is not prepared to surrender a foot's breadth of his territory, while on the other side the Vatican is doing its utmost to stamp out the heresy at Forano. In order to prevent further secessions the clerical party speedily called into being a number of Catholic rival enterprises—a loan society, a kindergarten, and so on. As for the pastor, whose maintenance comes not only from American sources, but who owns landed property in Forano itself, he is in a position to hold his own against this competition, especially if, as he hopes, he is helped from other Protestant quarters.

In the evening we had the good fortune of attending the Protestant service. About eight o'clock the bell tolled for the first time, and half-an-hour later the clean-looking little church was filling with worshippers. The interior of the church is somewhat sober and unadorned. Instead of a pulpit there is a platform, and on the wall above you behold a large white board with the ten commandments. Some 80 or 90 members of the congregation—all of the peasant class—have made their appearance, and are seated, the women on the right side, the men on the left. The minister, dressed in a plain black coat, ascends the platform and pronounces a short prayer, which is followed by the singing of a hymn. After this is finished, the minister calls on one of the "brethren," who offers up a free prayer. Another hymn (Luther's), "A mighty stronghold is our God" *(Forte rocca è il nostro Dio)*, the sermon, and free prayer by another brother—this time by a young soldier who has been seriously wounded in the disastrous battle of Adowa, an exceedingly intelligent young man, with a gentle, dreamy face; then a third hymn closes the service. Very touching the whole of it was: men, as well as women, in deepest, sincerest devotion, hanging on the lips of their spiritual shepherd, all filled with that mystical spirit which you generally find characterising the Waldensian congregations. And how whole-heartedly they all joined in the singing of those curiously un-Italian hymns, taken—words and tunes—from the English and German! Without organ or even harmonium accompaniment let it be remembered, for the American money—which does not arrive by the bushelful either—has not gone far enough to cover that expense.

Should one or the other of our readers ever care, on the road from Florence to Rome, to make a stop at Stimigliano, and to pay a visit to the little Protestant settlement up there, he would at any rate find there an outpost of the reformed faith, standing his ground, in the midst of a hostile population, with an energy and amid difficulties which should insure the friendly interest and sympathy of Protestants of all shades.

The Confessional in the Church of England.

[*An article on this subject written by Miss Frances Power Cobbe some years ago is so appropriate to the present situation that we cannot do better than reprint it for the benefit of our readers.—Ed.*]

Let us try to explain why we deprecate vehemently the use of the confessional in the Church of England. The Reformation has been described in a dozen ways—as the political release of England from the foreign domination of the Pope—as the theological revolution which exploded mediæval doctrines of Transubstantiation, Mariolatry, &c., and introduced purer ideas—as the moral reform which cleared away all the vices engendered in the monasteries and nursed by indulgencies, and erected a standard of Puritan ethics which has been ever since the glory and the strength of England and America. All these views are true. But deeper than all, and more important than political or theological or even moral changes, we hold was the religious reformation which transformed for our Anglo-Saxon race for ever the habit of sacerdotal reliance into the sense of personal responsibility and personal relation of each soul to its Almighty Creator. Here lies the true difference, we believe, between Romanism and Protestantism — a difference of which all outward varieties of forms and doctrines are but the expression and manifestation.

To the Romanists (who may be said to include the whole of the Latin race), the Church is the primary idea, and each individual soul, in so far as it has any religious life, enjoys it as a member of the Church. A man is admitted by a priest at baptism into that only fold of salvation, and a priest keeps the keys which must open for him the world of future joy or future agony. His moral responsibility, nay, his very will and choice of good or evil, he can throw upon his ecclesiastical superior. He is the more meritorious and more saintly, the more he ceases to be a moral free agent and becomes the mere tool of the Church. But for the Protestant (shall we say for the Teuton race at large?), religion begins not in the Church, but in the individual. The sense of personal responsibility with him is paramount. He feels himself to be first a moral being, a child of God, and then, secondly, and in a subordinate sense, a member of a great organisation of religion which he calls a Church. The practical result of this difference of starting-point is obvious. To the Protestant, the idea of obtaining the Church's decision of his moral difficulties and a priest's absolution for his sins is entirely foreign and incongruous. His inner life is to him a sacred thing, so sacred that he can lay it bare to his Maker alone, while he shrinks with pain and disgust from revealing it to any human being. The notion of talking for hours together to another man about his sins and shortcomings, his broken resolutions, and his aspirations after better things, is not merely (as priests always say) the mortification of his pride; it is the desecration of his best feelings, an offence to a spiritual modesty as true and holy as any corporal law. Shall we say all this is a mistake on the part of the Protestant, and that he ought to be exhorted to thrust it aside and lay open his inmost heart, not to his nearest and dearest human friend in some moment of supreme trial or tenderness, but to the gentleman who happens to be the clergyman of his parish, young or old, wise or foolish, as he may chance to be, and as a regular periodical practice, a sort of moral ablution, to be taken like his morning bath? The thing is monstrous, so monstrous that, except when very young or very weak, we suspect that Englishmen will for many a day be rarely found to heed such invitations. But the case is different with women, whose tender consciences, aimless lives, and natural longing for sympathy and support, must for ever expose them to the mistake that the act they really seek as an indulgence of self-love is one of self-denial, because it involves some pretty show of humiliation. Will it, then, be less mischievous to Englishwomen than to Englishmen to go to confession? We are persuaded that it will be still more hurtful to all the simplicity and delicacy of their feelings. The lady who wrote the celebrated essay in "The Church and the World," and assured us of the benefit she had experienced from the practice of confession, herself affords, as we think, a very excellent proof of the justice of our opinion upon this point. She begins by narrating how she deceived her father to enjoy her confession, and proceeds to unveil her religious emotions in a way which few Englishwomen could bear to do in a letter to a friend, much less in a printed book for the perusal of the world.

Protestants, it has often been lamented, are not fond of frequenting their churches at odd hours for the purpose of semi-private devotion. They have an extraordinary objection (but perhaps one not wholly unauthorised) to be seen "praying at the corner of the streets;" and as an Englishman's home is his castle, so the "chamber" where he can "shut his door" is his favourite church. The practice of confession, partially permitted by the fathers of the Reformation, was (like fasting) so alien to the Protestant spirit, that it dropped ere long into desuetude, and, till the resurrection of Romanism during the last quarter of a century, the idea, (unless in the case of some death-bed repentance for enormous crime) had passed utterly out of our minds. Surely it was well that so it did. The grosser evils of the confessional, as exhibited in Italy and Spain, we do not and cannot fear here. But the more spiritual harm, the injury to the inner sanctities of the religious life, are inseparable from the thing itself, be it practised by men never so purely intentioned; and this injury we look upon as a very canker in the blossom of our tree of life. Somewhat too much there may be among us of our "insularity" carried into our religion; somewhat too few efforts for mutual help; somewhat too much of that erroneous but not unpardonable hypocrisy-turned-inside-out, which makes an English

gentleman continually talk as if he wished his friends to believe he were not as generous, as unselfish and as pious, as he really is. But what venial faults are these compared to that thorough moral degeneration when every sanctuary of the heart has been rifled of its secrets; when the solemn responsibility of the will has been shifted to the shoulders of a priest; and when repentance itself has been talked about and analysed and rehearsed, till nothing remains for the man but to "peep and botanise upon his mother's grave."

FOR THE CHILDREN.

Santa Claus!

He comes in the night! He comes in the night!
He softly, silently comes;
While the little, brown heads on the pillows so white
Are dreaming of bugles and drums.
He cuts through the snow like a ship through the foam,
While the white flakes around him whirl;
Who tells him I know not, but he findeth the home
Of each little boy and girl.

His sleigh it is long, and deep, and wide;
It will carry a host of things,
While dozens of drums hang over the side,
With the sticks sticking under the strings.
And yet not the sound of a drum is heard,
Not a bugle blast is blown,
As he mounts to the chimney-top like a bird,
And drops to the hearth like a stone.

The little red stockings he silently fills,
Till the stockings will hold no more;
The bright little sleds for the great snow hills
Are quickly set down on the floor.
Then Santa Claus mounts to the roof like a bird,
And glides to his seat in the sleigh;
Not the sound of a bugle or drum is heard,
As he noiselessly gallops away.

He rides to the East, and he rides to the West,
Of his goodies he touches not one;
He eateth the crumbs of the Christmas feast,
When the dear little folks are done.
Old Santa Claus doeth all he can;
This beautiful mission is his;
Then children, be good to the little old man,
When you find who the little man is.

Under the hedges, where drifts the snow,
There will the dear little violets grow.

Little Elfie.

I have an elfish maiden child;
She is not two years old;
Through windly locks her eyes gleam wild,
With glances shy and bold.

Like little imps, her tiny hands
Dart out to push and take;
Chide her,—a trembling thimg she stands,
And like two leaves they shake.

But to her mind a minute gone
Is like a year ago;
So when you lift your eyes anon,
They're at it too and fro.

Sometimes, though not oppressed with thought,
She has her sleepless fits;
Then to my room in blanket brought,
In round-backed chair she sits;

Where, if by choice in graver mood,
A hermit she appears,
Seated in cave of ancient wood,
Grown very still with years.

Then suddenly the Pope she is
A playful one, I know,
For up and down, now that, now this,
Her feet like flash will go.

Why like the Pope? she's at it yet,
Her knee-joints flail-like go:
Unthinking men! it is to let
Her mother kiss each toe.

But if I turn away and write,
Then sudden look around,
I almost tremble; tall and white
She stands upon the ground,

In long night-gown, a tiny ghost,
She stands unmoving there,
Or if she moves, my wits are lost
To meet her on the stair!

O Elfie, make no haste to lose
Thy lack of conscious sense;
Thou hast the best gift I could choose—
A God-like confidence.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

Friend and brother wouldst thou find?
Hearts of love around thee bind?
Be thyself a heart of home:
To gentle hearts hearts gentle come.